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从改写理论与译者主体性视野论张爱玲《金锁记》英译本 *The Golden Cangue*

On the Role of "Rewriting" and Translator's Subjectivity: A Case Study of Eileen Chang's Translation Strategies in *The Golden Cangue*

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## Abstract

Eileen Chang (1920-1995), a shining star among the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese writers, is renowned for her romances, which gain an insight into human nature. *The Golden Cangue*, one of her most popular works, earns her a high place in the history of modern Chinese literature. Eileen Chang is not only an outstanding Chinese writer, but also possesses excellent English language skills. Maintaining the habit of translating her own works, she translated and published *The Golden Cangue*, *The Rouge of the North*, *Naked Earth*, *The Rice Sprout Song*, etc.

Self-translation is a unique type of translation. Compared with ordinary translators, self-translators can accurately grasp the intention and theme of the original and are entitled to authority and liberty in the rewriting of their works. In a sense, their choices seem more “arbitrary” as to which messages to be delivered to readers, as exemplified by Lin Yutang and Bian Zhilin, whose translations are more like creations based on the original.

The full autonomy that self-translators enjoy, coupled with delicate feelings they have towards their works, inevitably influences the way they pick target languages and translation strategies. Meanwhile, greater freedom also means tougher choices to make for self-translators because they need to take into consideration more factors. The “arbitrariness” they are entitled to can also be an element of distraction.

The first chapter elaborates on the definition of self-translation, traces the history of self-translation, makes comparisons between self-translators and the ordinary translators, and examines the development of self-translation in China by taking a bird’s eye view of Chinese bilingual writers and their works. The second chapter introduces the theory of rewriting posited by Andre Lefevere with an emphasis on three important concepts—professional, patronage and poetics, all of which are applied to analysis in the last chapter. Chapter Three provides background information about Eileen Chang, *Jin Suo Ji* and *The Golden Cangue*. Chapter Four discusses the

translation strategies in *The Golden Cangue* at the cultural level and the linguistic level. The last chapter analyses the translation strategies from the perspective of translator's subjectivity and the theory of "rewriting". What is worth mentioning is that faithfulness to the original and literal translation was not the translation strategy Chang always adhered to. Considerable adaptations of the source texts were made while she was translating her publications such as *Stale Mates* and *Chinese Life and Fashions*.

**Key Words:** self-translation; Eileen Chang; *The Golden Cangue*; translation strategies



## 摘要

张爱玲（1920年—1995年）是20世纪中国现代作家界一颗璀璨的明珠。她的作品洞察人性，语言犀利，《金锁记》是张爱玲最受读者欢迎的作品之一，也奠定她在现代文学史中重要的地位。张爱玲不仅是出色的中文作家，也有很高的英文造诣。她有自译自己作品的习惯，曾以英文出版*Naked Earth*、*The Rice Sprout Song*、*The Rouge of the North*、*The Golden Cangue*等多部作品。

自译是一种特殊的翻译形式。与一般译者相比，自译者对自己文章的主旨把握更准确，但对于想传达给读者的信息也带有很强的主观性。作为原作的主人，在翻译时享有权威和更大的自由，如林语堂、卞之琳等人就是很好的例证，他们的自译译文有如天马行空，肆意挥洒。而从张爱玲《金锁记》的译文中，读者不仅没有看到张爱玲对原文的任意发挥，呈现面前的反而是张对原文的忠实，亦步亦趋。自译者对于大幅改动权，有行使的权利，也有放弃的自由。其实从另一个角度说，选择极端忠实，甚于普通译者的忠实程度，也是自译者对本身权利的一种解读与诠释。因为重要的是作品精髓的传达，以及翻译目的的实现。

自译者在翻译时享有更大的自主权，对作品怀有的特殊感情，不可避免地左右着他们对目标语和翻译方法的选取和偏好。本文旨在探究张爱玲在精通双语的情况下，选用何种翻译策略来翻译自己的得意之作《金锁记》，并对其采取的翻译策略，从译者主体角度以及赞助人角度进行了分析。

论文第一章介绍了自译的定义、起源及历史，并比较了自译者与普通译者的异同，同时回顾了自译在中国的发展。第二章介绍了勒阿弗尔的改写理论，着重指出了该理论中三个重要的概念——专业人士、赞助人和诗学。第三章介绍了张爱玲、《金锁记》原文及译文的基本情况。第四章从文化层面和语言层面选取了大量例证，总结了《金锁记》译文的翻译策略。最后一章从改写理论角度和译者主体性角度，对《金锁记》译文的翻译策略进行了集中的分析，值得注意的是，忠实于原文，并不是张爱玲一直以来的自译策略，她在汉译 *Stale Mates* 与 *Chinese Life and Fashions* 等作品时，曾表现出大幅度的改写倾向。

**关键词：**自译 张爱玲 《金锁记》 翻译策略



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## Introduction

### Research Background

Eileen Chang (1920-1995), or Zhang Ailing, is a distinctive and exceptional woman writer and translator in the history of Chinese modern literature. Her works, featuring sharp tongue, gain a deep insight into human nature. Her most famous works include *Jin Suo Ji* (《金锁记》), *Love in a Fallen City* (《倾城之恋》), *Lust, Caution* (《色·戒》), *Red Rose and White Rose* (《红玫瑰与白玫瑰》) and anthologies of short stories—*Written on Water* (《流言》) and *Legend* (《传奇》).

Eileen Chang is not only an outstanding Chinese writer, but also possesses excellent English writing skills. Maintaining the habit of translating her own works, she translated and published *The Golden Cangue*, *The Rouge of the North*, *Naked Earth*, *The Rice Sprout Song* and *Wu Si Yi Shi* (《五四遗事》). Of Chang studies, most are centered on her fiction, which have secured her place in the Chinese literary tradition, but few are conducted on her self-translations. As a matter of fact, Chang's literary achievements are partially indebted to her bilingualism—a fact often overlooked in criticisms of her works. Through self-translation, she underscored the discrepancies between Chinese and English literary and cultural conventions.

Unlike ordinary translators, the dual identity of author-translator brings self-translators the “privileged access to the text”, “the liberty that a self-translator presumably has as the author of the text”, and “the undisputed authority that comes with authorship” (Ehrlich, 2007:1). Their choices seem more “arbitrary” as to which kind of messages to be delivered to readers, as exemplified by Lin Yutang and Bian Zhilin, whose translations are more like creations based on the originals. Nevertheless, the same situation does not apply to Eileen Chang and her translation. In Eileen Chang's translation of *Jin Suo Ji*, few traces of free translation can be found, and even sentence structures and the organization of material are surprisingly alike in the bilingual texts. Her loyalty to the original is astounding, which is uncommon in

self-translations. As a matter of fact, self-translators are free to waive their right of making bold omissions, additions and adaptations. Chang did not renounce her right—the freedom of making drastic alterations. On the contrary, she made her choice by staying extremely faithful—another interpretation of making full use of her authority and liberty—though not the way one normally would expect in self-translators. We should be aware that what matters is that the essence of the original has been transmitted via her self-translation and the initial goals set at the time she decided to translate her own works are well met.

The phenomena of her extreme faithfulness to the original can be accounted for basically by two reasons. Translations are produced under the joint forces of both the translator and the external environments. The ideology of her sponsors and favorable or unfavorable turns in life swayed her thoughts and feelings and rendered the translation as what it looks now. On the one hand, according to the theory of rewriting proposed by André Lefevere, translations are bound to be influenced by professionals inside the literary system, patrons outside the system (consisting of the ideological, the economic, and the status components), and the dominant poetics. The translators' own principles and ideas may be in line with the ideology of patrons or at odds with it. In the case of the latter situation, the ideology of patrons may be imposed on translators.

On the other hand, thwarted in her pursuance of becoming a renowned writer of English fiction in America, she was unable to restore her old status of a glorious celebrity in Shanghai. Furthermore, brought up in an old-fashioned official family, she was exposed to western civilizations through voracious reading and education in a missionary school and at The University of Hong Kong. The cultural collision propels her to yearn for freedom, to despise corruption and depravity of the feudal society but at the same time cherish traditional Chinese cultures. The combination of these emotions is manifested in her translations.

## **Previous Research on Eileen Chang**

Over the past century few writers “have had as much influence on the development of



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